

Amendments to the Specification

Please replace paragraph [0035] with the following amended paragraph:

A₁ [0035] An object of the present invention is to overcome the above-described problems of the prior art. [more] More specifically, it is an object of the present invention to provide a reticle transfer system that can prevent a reticle from being damaged as it is transferred. It is another object of the present invention to prevent operation errors in a linear carrier for temporarily holding a reticle transferred thereto.

Please replace paragraph [0045] with the following amended paragraph:

A₂ [0045] Therefore, the reticle transfer system will only transfer the reticle from a reticle cassette to a [reticule] reticle exposing stage when the reticle is oriented in such a way as to ensure a smooth transfer operation.

Please replace paragraph [0065] with the following amended paragraph:

A₃ [0065] Referring to Fig. 3, the reticle cassette 23 comprises a case having a front opening, a cover 23c disposed over the front opening, and a linear guide bar 23b and an L-shaped guide bracket 23a disposed in the case at rear and front sides thereof, respectively. The linear guide bar 23b and L-shaped guide bracket 23a support the [reticule] reticle 21 at a predetermined height off of the bottom of the case of the reticle cassette. The cover 23c is opened or closed automatically according to the state of transfer of the [reticule] reticle 21.

Please replace paragraph [0075] with the following amended paragraph:

A4 [0075] The pair of fingers of the supporting protrusion 29a can be spaced apart by a maximum distance D larger than the width d of the reticle. The fingers of the fixing protrusion 29b move toward or away from each other in the direction of the arrows shown in Fig. 4 to fix the [reticule] reticle 21 in place on the bottom of the linear carrier 29 when the reticle 21 is loaded in a correct relative position on the linear carrier 29.

Please replace paragraph [0085] with the following amended paragraph:

A5 [0085] Referring to Fig. 3, the fork arm 27 is moved horizontally by a transfer mechanism into the reticle cassette 23 to receive the [reticule] reticle 21. As the fork arm 27 is being inserted into the reticle cassette 23, the cover 23c of the reticle cassette 23 is opened by a cover operating mechanism. Once inside the cassette 23, the fork arm 27 is moved upward into contact with the reticle 21, whereupon the position sensor 30 of the fork arm 27 senses for the presence of the reticle 21.